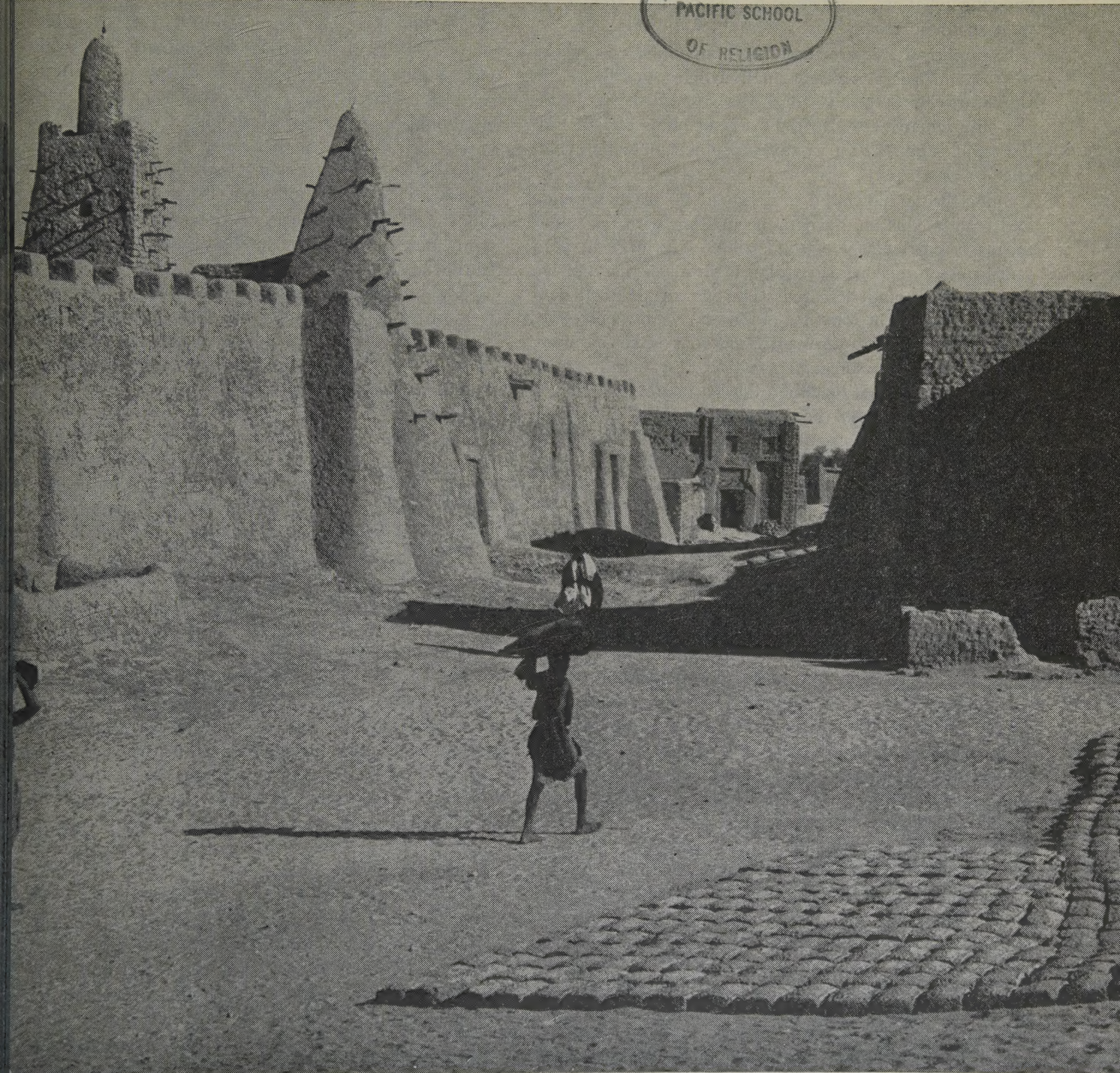
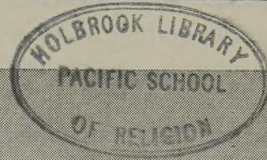


the Alliance Weekly

JULY 17, 1957



— THREE LIONS

MUD MOSQUE IN TIMBUKTU, AFRICA

In this issue

THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH By Rev. Olav Eikland
THE CHURCH—HER DEBTS By Rev. William F. Bryan

1957 THE EDITORIAL VOICE

WE NEED TO ELEVATE OUR SIGHTS

There are few things as frustrating as to work without knowing what we are trying to accomplish; that is, to be lost in the means and ignorant of the end.

Examples of this are found in "parts" factories where men spend years making small articles that have no significance in themselves and can have satisfying meaning only when related to hundreds of other and dissimilar articles and to the completed object of which each one is a small part.

Since the human mind is designed to deal with ends and wholes, this enforced preoccupation with parts and means is particularly disconcerting. The urge to plan and to create according to plan is strong in us, and we feel fenced in and defeated when we are compelled to spend our days in toil that attains no visible objective. It is this rather than the work itself that makes so many jobs dull and boring.

I have wondered whether the flat tedium found in most churches cannot be explained at least in part as the psychological consequence of numbers of persons meeting together at stated times without quite knowing why they have met. Most people simply do not like to go to church and will not go if they can escape the ordeal decently; and millions can and do.

It would be too easy to dismiss this dislike for church as only another symptom of original sin and love of moral darkness, but I believe that explanation is too pat to be wholly true. It doesn't explain enough. Some persons, for instance, find church intolerable because there is no objective toward which pastor and people are moving, aside possibly from the limited one of trying to enlist eight more women and ten more men to chaperon the annual youth cook-out or reaching the building fund quota for the month. And believe me, that can get mighty wearisome after a while, so wearisome indeed that alert, forward-looking persons often forsake the churches in droves and leave the spiritless, the dull and those afflicted with permanent insouciance to carry on, if a phrase so active dare be used to describe what they do.

To Paul there was nothing dull or tiresome in the religion of Christ. God had a plan which was being carried forward to completion, and Paul and "all the faithful in Christ Jesus" were part of that plan. It included predestination, redemption, adoption and the obtaining of an eternal inheritance in the heavenly places. God's

purpose has now been openly revealed (Eph. 3:10, 11).

It was the knowledge that they were part of an eternal plan that imparted unquenchable enthusiasm to the early Christians. They burned with holy zeal for Christ and felt that they were part of an army which the Lord was leading to ultimate conquest over all the powers of darkness. That was enough to fill them with perpetual enthusiasm.

It is one of the anomalies of religion in our day that the orthodox churches appear to have lost their crusading spirit (obviously for want of a crusade), and the enthusiasm they once had and lost has gone over to false religion and an evil political system. I refer to the course to Russellism and Communism.

Communism is an evil, but it drives on toward world domination for the very reason that its devotees are convinced that it is destined to dominate. It is this conviction that makes Communists all but invincible. At least one of them may perform for the cause carries the emotional warhead: it is the fixed belief that his work is part of a high plan that more than justifies it.

Russellism (now traveling under the alias of Jehovah's Witnesses) is also motivated by a clear purpose. Its followers talk with starry-eyed fervor about the "Kingdom" and, however far they may have strayed from the truth, they are nevertheless *convinced* that they are part of a new world order soon to emerge. To them the new order is completely real and in their enthusiasm they care little how many persons they offend or how many enemies they make. In the light of their glorious future nothing else matters. So they believe and their belief, though false, furnishes all the drive they need.

The evangelical Christian need make no apology for his beliefs. They are in direct lineal descent from the apostles. He can check the tenets of his tradition against the life-giving, transforming beliefs of the church fathers both East and West, reformers, mystics, missionaries, saints and evangelists, and they will check out one by one. Then let him check them all with the Holy Scriptures and again they will prove to be sound.

What then is the trouble? Why the inertia, the torpor that lies over the church?

The answer is that we are too comfortable, too rich, too contented. We hold the faith of our fathers, but it does not hold us. We are suffering from judicial blindness visited upon us because of our sins. To us have been committed the most precious of all treasures, but we are not committed to it. We insist upon making religion a form of amusement and will have fun whether or not. We are afflicted with religious myopia and see only things near at hand.

God has set eternity in our hearts and we have chosen time instead. He is trying to interest us in a glorious tomorrow and we are settling for an inglorious today. We are bogged down in local interests and have no sight of eternal purposes. We improvise and muddle along, hoping for heaven at last but showing no eagerness to get there, correct in doctrine but weary of prayer and bored with God.

The Law of Spiritual Growth

By REV. OLAV EIKLAND

HERE was a time in my life when I thought all my progress in Christian growth depended on my coming to know the wonderful sensations accompanying my first taste of deeper sanctification.

Whenever I felt the chill of worldliness or lukewarmness in my soul I would recall that early Sunday morning in my youth when, at the door of the church where I was the pastor, God met me in a way I had never known Him before. On the threshold of the empty church I realized God's presence so vividly that Isaiah 6 became a description of my own experience. A wave as of liquid fire penetrated my whole being. After this baptism I was filled with a sense of purity and power, joy and love to God and man.

So absorbed did I become in the sacredness of that sacred hour that many years when changes in my emotional life brought spiritual chill I was tempted to seek a renewal of that I had felt on that memorable day morning. Later I learned that the way to purity comes not by calling certain emotions, but by faith in and obedience to Christ.

I found that experiences characterized by cataclysmic stirrings or excitement alone are not the center of the circumference of the Christian life. It is well to seek a renewal of Christ's presence within us, but there is danger in seeking a repetition of a previously experienced sensation as evidence of Christ's presence.

An upheaval in the emotions may accompany the means God uses in the cultivation of a soul, but the basis for His operation is the law of growth. Evidently persons such

as those mentioned by the Editor of THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY in an editorial (July 18, 1956), who require "all babies to be born full grown, and all pilgrims to reach their destination the same moment they set out on their journey," are fixing their gaze on certain phenomena which may sometimes accompany God's operation rather than on His basic work. God as a husbandman patiently uses all means for the cultivation of that to which He has given life.

The experience on the threshold of the deeper life has its place in Scripture and should have its rightful place in Christian life. But we should not forget that the divine Husbandman (John 15) works according to a definite law in the spiritual world, similar to that of the

natural world. This law of life is clearly outlined in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. "When we were dead in sins" God "quickened us together with Christ" into new life, both Jews and Gentiles (ch. 2). Once "rooted and grounded in love" we are to grow in comprehension, in knowledge and in love, growing upward and outward in breadth, length, depth and height until we be filled with all the fullness of God (3:16-19). That fullness is attended by our "speaking the truth in love," which is one evidence that He is enabling us to "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (4:15).

The greatest force in the natural world is growth. Cataclysmic operations in the cultivation of a plant consist in the clearing away of

QUOTES FROM OUR CONTEMPORARIES

LEITH SAMUEL, in *The Life of Faith*, says:

"Christ died that I might live a life of holiness, delivered from my sin. He did not die only that my past might be forgiven and forgotten and I might go to heaven when I die; He died that the period in between forgiveness and heaven might be crammed with all the glory that our almighty Saviour can pour into it."

"Revival," says E. W. LAWRENCE, in the *Gospel Banner*, "is a very personal matter."

"It must begin in my heart and in your heart. And it must begin today. The revived life is, after all, the fully surrendered, the crucified and broken one. Only as self is nailed to the cross can Christ have the pre-eminence; and only when He has this unique position can revival come to us."

stones, of weeds and roots of old trees from the ground, making it ready for cultivation. The pruning knife is another instrument for cataclysmic change in the life of a new plant. But the growth process is what a horticulturist most wants to see.

God, the divine Husbandman, also is interested mostly in the growth process. Here His patience is demonstrated. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain" (James 5:7). The earthly husbandmen of God, His servants in His church, do the same. While they go about a fruit tree and "dig about it, and dung it," they often look up to heaven praying for rain. And the former rain may not come from heaven but from their own eyes as they weep over the slow growth of seed they have sown or of trees they have planted.

Springtime and early summer rains foster revival in the vegetable kingdom. Spiritual revival follows the same law: A pastor or evangelist can use the instruments God has given him for removal of the roots and weeds of the old Adamic life in preparation for seed sowing. He can use the pruning knife as a continuous operation for keeping the old man

in the state of perpetual fruitlessness. But he must use it at the right time and with loving care and prudence. He must not forget that God is the real husbandman even though He puts the sword of the Spirit in His servant's mouth as an effective pruning knife for the souls of fellow men.

In order to become effective husbandmen God's servants must present themselves as living sacrifices, offering their every ability unto Him. The great qualification for this task is patience. Many are the Biblical admonitions to have patience: "In your patience possess ye your souls." "The Lord direct your hearts . . . into the patience of Christ" (A.S.V.). "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect." Moses was excluded from entering Canaan because of his impatience with Israel. Preachers are not excluded from heaven because of impatience, demonstrated in scolding an assembly of Christians, but they may be excluded from entering the promised land of revival blessings.

Patient cultivation of the life in Christ is the secret of fruitfulness and growth. When Christians are bearing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23) they nourish one another and "grow up into him in all things,

which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:15, 16).

Our growth in grace is not dependent, therefore, upon whether our feelings are always aglow. Rather than seeking to recapture a glorified moment of spiritual elevation which may have been incidental, the initial step of full consecration we should make sure that at all joints where we touch others edification results. When the opposite is true and there is irritation at all joints the body is weakened and emaciated. Our progress is greatest when we are least concerned about ourselves but are wholly occupied with Christ and the fulfillment of His purpose in His Body. ♦ ♦



Copies of *Means of Advance*, the report of Alliance missions for 1956, presented to the 1957 Council, may be secured free of charge by writing the Foreign Department, 260 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y. Supply is limited and we suggest that those interested write immediately.

The Martha-Mary Church at South Sudbury, Mass.

LOUIS C. WILLIAMS

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THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY

The New Testament Church

By REV. WILLIAM F. BRYAN

II. Her Debts

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—ROMANS 12: 1.

E can never overemphasize the fact that the church, composed of those who have been baptized into Christ, is not a neutral body. Her history, her history and her present circumstances take her completely out of the ordinary and place her distinctly in the realm of the supernatural. One of the many reasons for her controversial place in the world is her sense of infinite indebtedness. She must not be self-centered or conform to every wind of public opinion while she is awake to her pressing obligations.

The individual believer and the collective body will profit by a careful consideration of the church's manifold debt. Our national debt is a staggering sum, and public servants, in their effort to help us appreciate its importance, have taken it down to the individual citizen. This is done in spite of the fact that as far as the government is concerned we will not pay equal taxes. By contrast, the church's obligation must be shared by every member. It becomes a part of every man and woman who has tasted the bitterness of sin and known the power of release.

First of all, the church of the First-Born is infinitely indebted to God for all He has wrought through the Lord Jesus Christ. In Romans 12 Paul describes that personal obligation: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Now whatever this presentation may mean, it is our *reasonable service*. It is not an extreme measure of some select group, neither is it a special qualification which is held at the option of the believer.

As we examine this "reasonable service" we find it includes a debt of absolute and unaffected worship. It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." There is a fallacy spreading among those who profess to be believers that time spent in worship is a kind of soothing spiritual experience not directly related to practical service. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Worship of God is the gist of the first commandment and the heartbeat of the New Testament Church. The first duty of the redeemed soul is to worship God. There is no substitute for solitude where the soul flows out to God in worship and yields to the tender ministry of the Holy Spirit. The place of true worship is the place of revelation, of correction and of enabling.

There is a certain "nervous" type of service we may carry on without worship. It may cause a great deal of excitement and attract a multitude of admirers, but service without worship is prematurely born and is helpless before the powers of spiritual darkness. The church owes a debt of worship to God, and until she learns to worship she cannot qualify to serve effectively. Instead of devotion and "studied" worship being relegated to the mystics, it is the place where all godly men are instructed and commissioned in any age. God has reserved the right to give personal instruction and enabling to His people. There are no talents or energies that can possibly substitute for this personal contact which is made and maintained in the quiet place of utter abandonment and unaffected worship.

The natural and practical result of true worship is unquestioning

obedience. Service and religious activity may spring from very high motives and not be obedience at all. King Saul is a case in point. In a time of anxiety and need he rushed into a flare of "service," activity that opened the way to one of the great tragedies of all time. When questioned by Samuel he said, "I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering" (1 Sam. 13:12). Now Saul knew very well that God had established a special order regarding offerings and holy services, and what appeared to be zeal was sheer panic that resulted in disgrace for Saul.

It is not enough to preach and include the Word, we must "preach the word." It is not enough to do something for the Lord; we are to obey the Lord. This we owe, and we will never owe any more or less. It is our reasonable service. Any presentation of grace that renders obedience unnecessary is a perversion of grace. Paul informed the young preacher Titus that the "grace of God . . . hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." This is our reasonable service. There is no other way to prove that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. By the same token, there is no possible way to obey God in a fallen world without presenting our bodies a living sacrifice.

Now if worship results in obedience and obedience requires sacrifice, just what are we to sacrifice? Christ has appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Inasmuch as we know God was satisfied with His sacrifice for sin, we are sure that the believer's sacrifice

has absolutely nothing to do with the work of atonement. Again, Christ died once and met a legal requirement never to be repeated, while the church's debt has to do with a living sacrifice relating to continual service. It is a wonderful thing to know that the church was with Christ on the cross positionally; it is no less wonderful that the church is to bear about in her body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

The purpose of His sacrifice was to fulfill God's will in effecting deliverance for those that are bound. Our debt of living sacrifice is to accomplish God's will in manifesting that deliverance, not being conformed to this world but rather being transformed, proving that good and perfect will of God daily. Revival will have come when the church recognizes her debt of worship, obedience and sacrifice to God.

As the church is indebted to God, she is equally indebted to herself on a different level. The term "debt" is used here in the sense that one might say a man owes it to himself to secure food and take rest for his body or the neglect will be fatal.

In that great twelfth chapter of First Corinthians the church is beautifully described. In the twenty-seventh verse we are made to understand that she owes it to herself to maintain a standard worthy of her position. The inspired writer says, "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." This is a basic fact which must be kept in focus at all times. When this truth is forgotten the church becomes a prey to every opportunist and politician that comes along. No standards may safely be considered apart from this one great fact. The church is the Body of Christ. Other activities may be good in their place, but we must always answer the question: Are the activities or ministries we permit worthy of the Christ we represent and the cause He has revealed?

A man may stand high in the community or be listed among the world's great, but in Christ he must humbly take his place as a member of the body. All that he did outside of Christ is utterly unrelated to his place in this sacred order. All that counts here is one's contribution to the body. It is sacrilege and non-

sense to suppose that any person or program of the world can enhance the beauty or improve upon the functions of this body. When the church loses sight of her Head sufficiently to call for help from any other source or play for any other love, she dishonors her Head and sins against her very nature. A man would not be acting more against his own interest to eat sweetened poison than the church would be destroying herself by lowering her standards for worldly praise and favor.

The church's obligation to herself includes a discipline worthy of her authority. Who will deny the fact that a mincing and indefinite membership of timid souls who try to make the message and mission of the church adjust to the demand of all comers is a blight and curse among us? It is a blessing to see new churches springing up across our land if they become *churches* with a consciousness of divine urgency and authority. Mere gatherings, where men may serve without discipline and direction of the Spirit, is dissipation rather than development. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians was full of directives on such things as partyism, immorality, litigation among believers, marital duties, church offices, idolatry, spiritual gifts, and so forth. The church is obligated to deal with these things before she can succeed in outside services.

The third aspect of indebtedness which the church must accept is her debt to the heathen and the world. Again, it is Paul who states the case so clearly: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Rom. 1:14). The church of the living God stands in the world as a messenger commissioned, as a witness compelled and as a message committed. While the actual service is to the world, the authority is of the Lord.

Few people will read these lines



Truth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in Holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the same spirit wherewith it was written. We should rather search after profit in the Scriptures than after subtle arguments.
—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

who are not familiar with the la words of our Lord Jesus Christ Matthew 28:19 when the commission was officially given: "Go therefore, and teach all nations. From that point on no believer may seriously question the relationship between the church and the heathen. Volumes have been written and endless arguments given regarding the state of the heathen and the debt of the church. The question was settled for all time at the very beginning of the Church Age. It is not a doctrine that will permit interpretation. It is not merely a logical conclusion. It is not an emotional matter that must be promoted by tricks and dramatics. *It is a divine commission! "Go ye."*

The personnel commissioned and the method to be used is carefully safeguarded in another great missionary text: "Ye shall receive power . . . ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). The personnel is safeguarded because only those who have received power are compelled to be witnesses. Again, the selection is made indirectly by the nature of the witness; it is a witness of Jesus Christ. We do not condemn social and educational help that many are making available to the heathen, but we do strongly affirm that this is not what Christ compels the church to do. We are compelled to "witness unto him." Other things are good; this is essential. Other things help men; Jesus Christ saves them.

The most personal aspect of indebtedness to the man outside of Christ is explained in Second Corinthians: "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (3:3). The spoken message may be correct and the messenger sincere, but all is in vain unless the messenger and the message are one. The final proof of personal commission and the authority of the witness, at home or abroad, will rest ultimately upon what we are. Men may argue with truth spoken but the only answer to Christ manifested is the positive statement: "These men are the servants of the most high God." ♦ ♦



DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

HOME

Support Graham converts seeking church membership: More than 40 per cent of those making "decisions for Christ" during the first four weeks of the Billy Graham New York Crusade had no church affiliation, according to a spot check by the Protestant Council of the City of New York. Dr. Phillips P. Elliott, council president, said the evaluation showed that virtually all of the non-church members referred to churches were presenting themselves for church membership.

Gospel missions group elects Gregory: The International Union of Gospel Missions recently held its forty-fourth convention in Houston, Tex. Rev. Clifton E. Gregory, superintendent of the City Mission of Cleveland, Ohio, was elected president. Plans were announced for the annual Rescue Mission Training School at Winona Lake, Ind., July 24 to 28.

Southern Baptists approve Canadian liaison group: A joint committee to serve as a liaison group between the Canadian Baptist Federation and the Southern Baptist Convention was approved at the annual meeting of the SBC in Chicago. Dr. T. B. McDormand, of the Canadian Baptist Federation, brought fraternal greetings from that group. He expressed appreciation for the warm relations between the two Baptist bodies.

BROAD

Establish congregation for Americans in Oslo: The Evangelical Lutheran Church has decided to establish a congregation for the nearly 2,000 American citizens living in Oslo, Norway. The church will be the first to give American citizens in their own language, according to Dr. Philip Dybvig, home missions director of the SBC, who is directing the project.

Niemoeller on evangelistic tour of Britain: Pastor Marius Niemoeller, president of the Evangelical Church of Germany and Nassau, is conducting an evangelistic tour of Great Britain. He is giving sermons and lectures in England and Wales upon the invitation of church groups there.

Communists continue ban on Bishop Dibelius: East German Communist authorities refused to issue a travel permit to Bishop Otto Dibelius, of Berlin, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKID), who was scheduled

to preside at the Kurmark Church Day observance in Potsdam, near Berlin. Kurmark is a large district of the Evangelical Church of Berlin and Brandenburg, of which Dr. Dibelius is bishop.

PEOPLE

Professor on hunt for Jeroboam's temple: Dr. James L. Kelso, professor of Biblical Archaeology and Semitics at Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary, left for the Holy Land to resume his search for Jeroboam's temple in ancient Bethel. This is the seventh time he has gone to the Holy Land to hunt for objects throwing light on Bible times.

Canadian named Youth for Christ executive director: Evon Hedley, of Toronto, Ont., has been named executive director of Youth for Christ International. The appointment was announced by Dr. Robert A. Cook, board chairman of the evangelical youth organization which has its headquarters in Wheaton, Ill. As executive director he succeeds Rev. Ted W. Engstrom, who was appointed president in February.

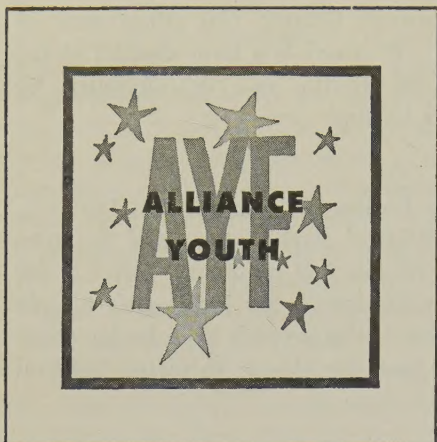
College head elected Presbyterian moderator: Dr. Robert N. Montgomery, president of Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, was elected moderator of the United Presbyterian Church of North America at its 99th General Assembly. He succeeds Dr. Robert W. Gibson, president of Monmouth (Ill.) College.

Lutheran minister serves sixty-five years: Andreas Bard, of Manhattan Beach, Calif., has been a Lutheran minister for sixty-five years—missing only a single Sunday service some years ago because of laryngitis. Dr. Bard was pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Kansas City, for forty-one years. Now eighty-five years old, Dr. Bard is believed to be the oldest active minister on the rolls of the United Lutheran Church.

Death claims Salvation Army pioneer: Mrs. Florence Soper Booth, of the Salvation Army, died recently at the age of ninety-five at her home in Finchampstead, England. In 1880, at the age of nineteen, Mrs. Booth turned from the study of art to begin her seventy-seven-year career with the Salvation Army after hearing a speech by her future mother-in-law, Mrs. William Booth, wife of the Army's founder. Two years later she was married to the late Gen. Bramwell Booth, of the Army.

THE PRESS

Plan Bible translation from Aramaic: A new translation of the Bible from the Aramaic dialect, the language spoken by Christ, will appear in October, the A. J. Holman Company, its publishers, announced in Philadelphia. George M. Lamsa, Bible scholar and author, has translated the work entitled "The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts" and subtitled "Being a Translation from the Peshitta, the Authorized Bible of the Church of the East."



WELDON B. BLACKFORD, Editor

Guidance on Every Side

By FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

During the summer AYFers are often concerned about the coming fall and winter days. School or occupation can become disturbing problems in which guidance is needed. Perhaps the following message may give help to some who are in need.

"The Lord . . . guided them on every side (2 Chron. 32:22).

See the completeness of Jehovah's guidance! It is so different from human guidance. How seldom we feel that a human counselor has seen our difficulty from every point of view, balanced all its bearings, and given guidance which will meet all contingencies, and be right not only on one side, but "on every side."

But "his work is perfect" in this as in all other details; He will guide "when ye turn to the left." Perhaps we have gone about as Elymas did in his mist and darkness, "seeking some to lead him by the hand," putting confidence in earthly guides and finding again that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," getting perplexed with one-sided counsels. Let us today put our confidence in His every-sided guidance.

Very often the very recoil from an error lands us in an opposite one. Because others or we ourselves have gone too far in one direction, we thenceforth do not go far enough or vice versa, excess reacting in defect and defect in excess; a received truth overshadowing its equally valuable complementary one; the fear of overstepping the boundary line of the narrow track of truth and right, on the one side, leading us unconsciously to overstep it on the other side.

But the promise which we should claim is that the Holy Spirit would guide us into *all* truth, "on every side."

How intensely restful is this completeness of guidance! There is nothing outside of God's all-inclusive promises about it. "I will direct *all* his ways." "I will direct their work in truth." Not only the general course, but "the *steps* of a good man are ordered by the Lord"; and what is less than a single step! Just realize this: every single step of this coming day is ordered by Jehovah! And lest you should sigh "this is not for me because I am not good" He repeats the same assurance still more simply: "The Lord directeth his steps." Now if we really believe these words *need* we feel worried because we cannot see the steps ahead?

If we will let Him! Yes, this is no fatalistic leading. The guidance is conditional. He says, "I will guide thee with mine eye," but then we must look up to meet His eye. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel," but then we must listen for and listen to His counsel. "He shall direct thy paths," but it is when we acknowledge Him in all our ways.

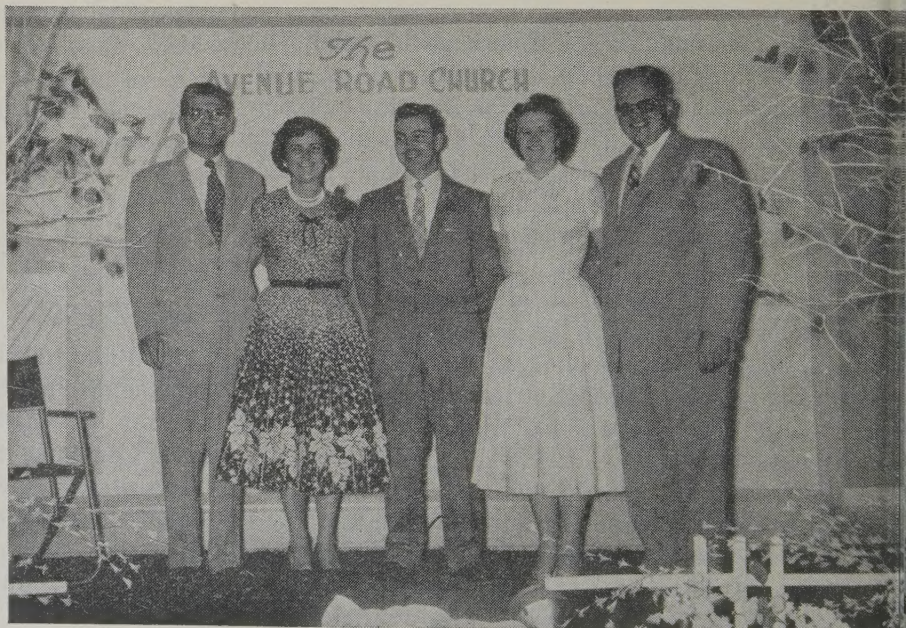
Suppose a little child is going with its father through an untracked wood. If it walks ever such a little way apart, it will make many a lost step. Though the father will not let

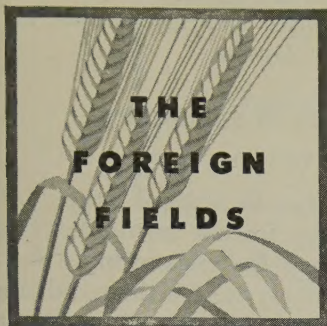
it get out of sight and hearing, will not let it get lost, yet he may let it find out for itself that going just the other side of this tree leads into a hopeless thicket; stepping just the other side of this stone leads into a muddy place, and the little steps have to be retraced again and again, till at last it asks the father to hold its hand and *puts* and *leaves* its hand in his. Then, and not then, there will be *no lost step*.

Need the little child go on a little longer by itself first? Had it not better put its hand into the father's at once? Will *you* not do so "from this time," from this way?

Even if the right paths in which He leads you are paths that you have not known say, "Even there shall thy hand lead me." Let Him teach you *His* paths, and ask Him to make not your way but "thy way straight before my face." So shall you find the completeness and the sweetness of His guidance. For "the Lord shall guide thee continually," "the springs of water shall he guide thee. He shall be the guide of your youth and carry you even unto your old age. He will be your guide even unto death, and beyond: for one strain of the song of the victorious ones that stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire shall be "thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."

Approximately 160 young people gathered together for the annual spring banquet at the Avenue Road Alliance Church, Toronto, Canada, May 24, 1957. Pictured below are (l. to r.) Rev. Donald R. Shepson, pastor; Mrs. Shepson; John Cottrell, AYF president; Mr. Weldon Blackford, marimbist; Weldon B. Blackford, National AYF Secretary and speaker.





Reaching to the Manos

By MRS. R. D. LYTLE, French Guinea

I would not have a Mano, a Mano wife, or anything belonging to a Mano," is a common saying among the Guerzé people. Because many Manos were formerly their slaves, and because only a small portion of their tribe extends into French Guinea, the 25,000 Manos of the N'Zérékoré area are considered inferior by the more numerous Guerzés. Being the dominant tribe of the section, the Guerzés have received first consideration from the administration and from our Mission as well.

Knowing this background, one can better understand the feelings of the Mano chief who asked Michael Haba, the African pastor at N'Zérékoré, "Why do your missionaries work only among the Guerzés? Why don't they ever visit the Mano villages?" Although the Guerzé work was pressing, we felt that this suggestion could not go unheeded and that the Manos must have an opportunity to hear the gospel.

As we began our itinerary among the Manos, we wondered how they would respond. But after two days in the first village, we knew the answer. When we gave an invitation for those who wished to accept Christ, thirty-four people crowded into the house.

Had they really understood? As we explained the way of salvation more fully, one of the inquirers stood up and addressed the group in these words: "When Michael preached here the last time, I was convinced of the truth of this way. I told him to write my name down

as a believer. Michael refused to do so because I would not confess my sins and accept Jesus as my Saviour. During these meetings I've come to realize that sin is a big thing in God's eyes. He cannot accept us unless our sins are forgiven. I'm ready now to confess my sins and accept Jesus." During the next ten days we met others who were as sincere as this man in their desire to know the Lord.

At N'Zao we met Heni, a young woman whom Maamee, a Mano Christian woman at N'Zérékoré, had won to the Lord. Although she has been a Christian only a short time, Heni had been the means of bringing her father to Christ. During the services Heni's mother and several older women were among those who came to pray. Many of these said that it was through Heni that they had first heard the gospel.

Leaving the car at N'Zao, we walked through the forest to reach the next four villages. The gospel had never been preached in these places before. We had heard that the Manos were ardent fetish worshippers, so we were not surprised when, at Beei, a group of traveling sorcerers interrupted our morning service by coming to town and beginning their music and dancing. Some of our audience joined them as they paraded around town displaying a thin, sickly man whom, they said, their fetish had caught in witchcraft. The man had been ill for some time and they had promised that he would get well if he confessed. On this day he willingly paid

the fine for witchcraft in the hope of receiving healing.

These sorcerers usually spend five or six days in a town, hunting witches and eating free food. The next morning they left for Godi. When we arrived later at Godi, André, a student catechist, heard them talking. They thought that we were following them to interfere with their business, so they decided to leave.

At N'Zao we had met three men from the village of Kankore who had come for the purpose of entering the Christian way. They had never heard the gospel directly but had heard about it from a friend. Michael asked if they thought it wise to enter into a thing before knowing what it was. They answered, "Is it hard to recognize that which is good when you see it in your friend's hand?"

After listening to the gospel, these men accepted the Lord as Saviour. They were older men, one of them being the brother of the Kankore chief. Although we didn't reach Kankore on this trip, seven people from there heard the gospel in other villages and believed.

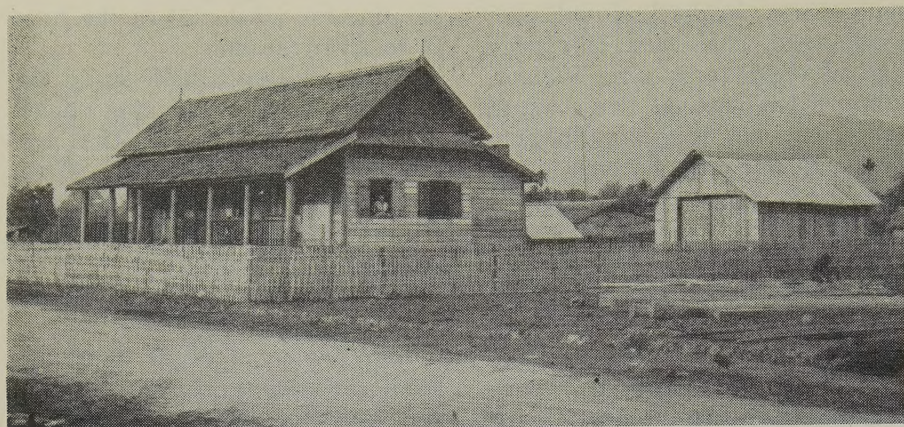
After spending two nights in each of six villages, we realized that the Lord had set before us an open door. Everywhere the Manos were responsive and friendly. Over one hundred came to pray. Among these were older men and women and several young couples. If they go on with the Lord, these responsible people will become pillars in the Mano church.

Wherever inquirers were dealt



Michael Haba,
African pastor at
N'Zérékoré, French
Guinea,
with his
wife and children

DOROTHY ELLENBERGER



The home of the Tubbs family in Sayaboury, Laos

G. W. TUBBS

with they said, "We know that if we enter this way, it isn't for a day or a week. It is something serious. Will there be someone who will lead us, and teach us? Will we have to learn Guerzé in order to read God's Word, or will there be books in Mano?" We promised to visit them from time to time. Since our return, a Mano primer and two hymns have been translated and as soon as these are printed we shall hold a short term school for the new Christians. The Mano Christians have been instructed to meet at N'Zao each Sunday for services with André.

The burning questions of our hearts are these: How are 25,000 Manos to be reached for Christ without a missionary couple who knows their language? How are the new believers, hungry for God, to be properly nourished and guided by missionaries whose time must largely be taken up by ministries in another tribe? Oh, that God might thrust forth laborers into this field which is now ripe, ere the harvest is lost forever!

"Zacchaeus—Come"

By WINIFRED SANFORD, *India*

One of the Alliance pastors in India is short in stature as Zacchaeus was. After a real experience of salvation and many years of acquaintance-ship with the Lord Jesus, this Indian pastor found himself "up a tree," hearing the voice of Christ calling him to come and walk in the avenue of self-support in the forward march of the Indian church.

The call, given at the Marathi Synod's annual meeting, was a call to lean upon the arm of Christ alone.

It was made very clear that in five years there would be no foreign funds to support workers in the Indian church. The challenge was to accept without murmur the hire which the Lord of the harvest would see fit to give through the keepers of the vineyard, the Marathi Synod.

Zacchaeus wanted to come down from the tree, as he later testified. He wanted to accept this challenge of dependence upon Christ; but he was not alone. The decision affected those so very close to him—his wife and five children, who must have food, a home, clothes and education. He could hear the whisper of the tempter, "What if the Indian church fails? What if the Christians will not give their tithes? What if the salary you receive is cut? How then will you be able to give your family proper support and education?"

It seemed to be growing very dark and the Saviour's face did not appear clearly in the gloom. Then a voice penetrated the darkness calling, "Zacchaeus, come . . ." Once again the Word of God was the weapon which won the victory in a decisive battle against the enemy of God's kingdom. Assurance came that the God who so faithfully dealt with His people under law, supplying their every need, would do even more under grace. Zacchaeus came down the tree again, this time to walk in utter dependence upon the One who had redeemed him and called him to serve.

The vision of an indigenous Indian church, freshly imparted at the conference in Bangkok, is leading on to progress. It is being transmitted by the working of the Spirit of

God to the hearts of such men as Zacchaeus of India and other pastors, evangelists and lay people of the Indian church.

Visitors in Sayaboury

By REV. GEORGE TUBBS, *Laos*

Sayaboury Province is large; in fact, too large for one missionary family. We have the responsibility for approximately twelve thousand square miles and at least 90 per cent of the area can be reached only on foot. During the rainy season *all* travel is done on foot! Yet to reach some of the people we have not had to travel at all, for many have come to us in the town of Sayaboury.

Since our arrival two years ago there has been no lack of visitors in our home, as we were the first foreign family to live here. Hundreds of persons have come to see the white family, often just sitting and watching. Many come for medicine and some to study English, but no matter what their motive we count it an opportunity to witness of God's power to save. A number of Buddhist priests have come and have listened to the gospel and received gospel literature.

A number of these visitors have manifested a desire to follow Jesus. There have been at least two decisions as a result of their visits in our home. One was made by Boot Dee. In a dream Boot Dee was told to go and see the American pastor. He came, not just out of curiosity but to find peace. We explained the gospel to him and he said he wanted to believe. He prayed a very simple prayer, confessing his sin and asking Jesus to cleanse his heart. Since then he has been coming quite regularly to the Sunday services. He walks four hours each way.

The phonograph has proved to be a great asset. Records provided by Gospel Recordings are used to give the gospel to the illiterate of several tribes. The Mèo in particular love these records and come back again and again to hear them.

It is difficult to keep to any schedule in the home as the people come at any hour. But we are happy for the contacts and trust you will pray with us that many will believe on Christ.

THE GROWING SUNDAY SCHOOL

MAVIS L. ANDERSON, Editor

Here's Your Answer!

to the question most frequently asked at Sunday school conventions

Perhaps you are ready to throw up your hands in despair and ask the superintendent to find another teacher for your class. "It wouldn't be so bad," you say, "if only they would pay attention!"

But that is just the point. They do pay attention. They pay attention to the thing that interests them most at the moment. Unless the pupil sees something in the lesson that is vitally related to himself, he occupies himself with something that is. The Junior boy pulls the chair out from under the boy in front of him. In the adult class, his dad settles back and plans the sales approach he will use on some prospective customer. Both are discipline problems and they are caused by a lack of interest and the absence of vital application of the truth.

If you can discover why attention seems to be directed everywhere but to the lesson, then you will have a clue to overcoming the discipline problem before it occurs.

It may be the lesson. To get off to a good start is half the battle. Spend extra time preparing the approach and you will be assured of capturing attention at the beginning.

The approach is often called the *point of contact*. It may take you some time to discover the "point" that will make the "contact" with your class, but it is worth hunting for. Know what appeals to your pupils and handle these attention-getters with such care and skill that you will have the class with you from the opening moment.

As you build toward a climax, make your teaching so practical that the pupils will see the truth for

themselves. Use plenty of illustrations and create real life situations with which the pupils can identify themselves.

Remember, an unprepared teacher who teaches an unrelated lesson while tied to a quarterly is inviting trouble.

It may be the school organization. If the pupils' interest has been lost through a disorganized general assembly of all ages, it will be very difficult for the teacher to capture their attention when class time arrives. A carefully departmentalized school that has an entire hour planned with the interests of the pupils in mind will work wonders as a precaution against discipline problems.

Or perhaps your class is too large. For effective work, keep classes small. The larger the class the more you multiply the problem of discipline. Two girls sitting on one chair start to giggle. The boys beyond your reach are apt to be reaching for something!

And did you know that four small classes can be taught in one room with less confusion than two large ones?

It may be the room. Have you considered that the attention of the pupil may be claimed by the physical discomfort of a chair that isn't the right height or by drowsiness brought on by poor ventilation? Perhaps he is fidgeting because he is either too hot or too cold. And don't think we are stretching the point if we suggest that a cluttered room may contribute to a disorderly class!

It may be the pupil. You will be inclined to think that all of your

clues lead to the pupil as the source of the trouble. If you do, you will struggle along in a losing battle. Certainly, he will manage you if he can. Every pupil is capable of misbehavior if given an opportunity. Don't let it floor you. On the contrary, always *expect* to get respect and coöperation.

If there is consistent misbehavior, look for some basic personality problem or home condition which is being reflected in the disruption plaguing you Sunday after Sunday. Follow through on the clue by gaining the confidence of the pupil and his parents. Where a measure of discipline is necessary, be charitable.

Restless activity can often be directed into purposeful responsibilities. Simple duties such as acting as march leader, blackboard monitor, crayola custodian or room monitor, or week-by-week appointments to assist with the class will do wonders with children. Older pupils who are given an opportunity to develop their talents and to work on projects will begin to pay attention because you have put *them* into the picture.

It may be you. Naturally you will hesitate to look too close to home for the clue to the trouble, but you might as well face it.

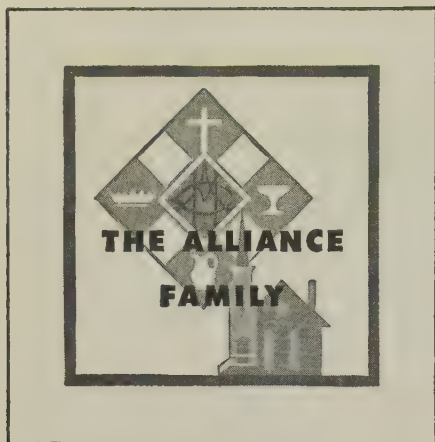
Do you get to Sunday school early enough? Do you provide the pupil with some constructive activity as soon as he arrives? Do you keep things moving or do you flounder through the lesson and give him a chance to move in and take over? Do you love him enough to get to know him and appreciate him as a real friend? Do you pray daily for each one? Do you ask others to pray with you, especially for the problem pupil?

Look for the clue to the problem, take the necessary precautions, and expect to get attention. How wonderful it is to discover that your pupils *are* paying attention—no, not necessarily to you, but to the vital truth you are relating to their lives.



PASTORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS

This is the month for Standard check-up reports. Help make your district 100 per cent by submitting yours. Last year the "100 per centers" were the Southwestern and New England districts.



CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod. The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

To the Fields

Miss Ruby Brown sailed from New York on June 28 returning to French West Africa for her second term of service.



Ruby M. Brown
French West Africa



Pauline Roseberry
Indonesia

She will be stationed at Kankan where she is the bookkeeper for the French West Africa field.

Rev. and Mrs. John D. Ellison and children, Ruth and Theodore, sailed from San Francisco July 3, returning to Thailand for their second term. They will be stationed at Surin, from which center they will minister to some 500,000 Cambodian-speaking Thai people in the provinces of Surin, Buriram and Srisaket.

Miss M. Pauline Roseberry, R. N., left San Francisco June 27 by plane, returning to Indonesia for her third term of service. She is a member of the Avondale Alliance Church, Avondale Estates, Ga.

On Furlough

Rev. and Mrs. R. W. Perry and children, Caroline, Sherrill and Richard, arrived in Miami by plane on July 2 from Colombia where they have just completed their third term. They have been working at the Bible Institute in Armenia.

Rev. and Mrs. Raymond A. Kowles and children, Ruth, Robert, Elizabeth and Timothy, arrived in Seattle on July 3 from the Philippine Islands where they have just completed their third term. They were accompanied by David Ruhl, son of Rev. and Mrs. F. E. Ruhl, who is coming home to finish his schooling.

Mr. and Mrs. Kowles have been stationed at Lamitan, Basilan City, working among the Yakan Moros.

Miss Olive Kingsbury, R.N., arrived in San Francisco June 29 for her first furlough from work in the Tribes of Viet Nam Mission. She has been at the leprosarium in Banmethuot.

Rev. and Mrs. C. L. Gardner and sons, James, Philip and Wesley, arrived in San Francisco July 3 from Thailand, having completed their first term of service. They have been stationed at Buriram.

Rev. and Mrs. W. Henry Holton and daughter, Mary, arrived in Los Angeles from Viet Nam on July 1, having completed their third term of service. They have worked among the Chinese people in the south.

With the Lord

Word has been received of the death, on May 31, of Rev. E. Ralph Hallman, pastor in Millwood, Spokane, Wash. Mr. Hallman died in an auto accident. He was forty-nine years old.

Mr. Hallman graduated from Simpson Bible College, then located in Seattle, Wash., in 1937 and was ordained to the ministry in 1938. He served churches in Chico, Manchester, Kent, Bellevue and Spokane, all in Washington. He is survived by his wife and a daughter, Mary Faith.

The New Generation

To Rev. and Mrs. Robert P. Turner, Ravenna, Ohio, a daughter, Janet Beth, on May 30.

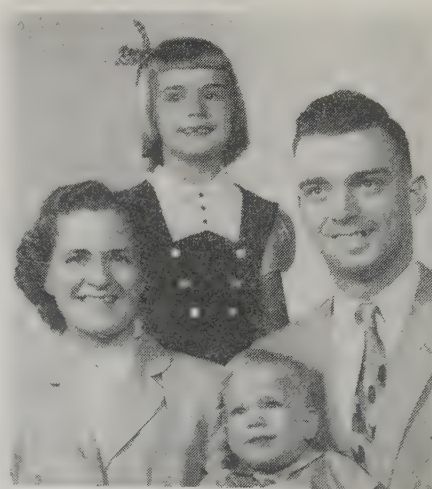
To Rev. and Mrs. A. J. Webster, Cortland, N. Y., a daughter, Esther Leone, on June 16.

To Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Young, Netherlands New Guinea, a daughter, Deborah Ruth, on June 25.

The Refreshing Continues

"The flavor of the meetings continues," writes Rev. William Moon, pastor of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church at Newark, N. Y., concerning special meetings held early in June with

Rev. and Mrs. John D. Ellison and family
Thailand



Rev. Harry Jueckstock, Assistant District Superintendent. Several persons met the Lord at the altar and the whole congregation was spiritually helped.

Hawley (Minn.) Church Refreshed

Nine days of special meetings held recently in the Christian and Missionary Alliance church at Hawley, Minn., with Rev. L. J. Pyne, of the Bureau of Evangelism, brought spiritual refreshing to the congregation. The pastor, Rev. A. J. Borchardt, writes that almost every service concluded with several persons at the altar, many seeking for the filling of the Holy Spirit. Two adults also came for salvation during the campaign.

South Pacific Missionary Rallies

Four of the five regional sections of the women's missionary fellowship of the South Pacific District held their rallies during April and May. One was held at Price, Utah, with unusual blessing and renewed vision reported.

The Sequoia zone met at Cutler, Calif., with Mrs. Robert Sjoblom, of Thailand, as speaker for the day. The new president of this zone is Mrs. Dorothy Christianson, of Fresno. Glendale, Calif., was host to the southern zone women, with Mrs. M. C. Allen, of Indonesia, Miss Ruth Lindstrom, of China, and Mrs. Sjoblom as speakers. The Compton group won the attendance award.

The women of the Bay Area met in the Oakland Neighborhood Church, having as speakers Mrs. Paul Allen, former missionary to Persia (Iran), and Miss Charlotte Schon, formerly of the Tribes Mission in Viet Nam. Mrs. Allen was elected president. The Arizona women met earlier in the year at Casa Grande, with Mrs. Bernice Gibson, of Israel, speaking and Miss Janet Woehrer, of India, conducting the session of prayer. All areas report new zeal and interest in missions at home and abroad, writes the district missionary secretary, Miss Mary Murdock.

Missionary Meetings at Delray Beach

The ministry of a veteran missionary couple, Rev. and Mrs. W. S. Martin, of French West Africa, and of Rev. Roy Forward, formerly a missionary to South America, was recently used of the Lord to bring unusual blessing to the Alliance church at Delray Beach, Fla. The Martins participated in all the services of the church on June 9, and Mr. Forward combined missions and evangelism in messages given from June 12 through 19.

The pastor, Rev. J. W. Swanson, attributes the splendid results to well-attended prayer meetings held mornings preceding and during the campaign. The presence of the Lord was very real and many young people dedicated their lives to His work; their parents also dedicated themselves to the working out of God's purpose in the lives of their children.

Sunday

READING—1 Peter 1:1-9.

TEXT—"An inheritance . . . reserved in heaven for you" (verse 4).

When the sea captain sees a sailor boy growing white as he climbs the mast, he shouts to him, "Look up," and the boy's nerves grow cool and his fears are assuaged. So the Lord on that night when He was bidding His disciples not to let their hearts be troubled, told them of the Father's house of many mansions in the place prepared. Let us begin every trial with the thought of heaven, the hope of His coming and the joy set before us. We, too, shall be enabled to endure the cross . . . and often sing:

*"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."
—A. B. SIMPSON.*

Pray for The Island World; Eastern, South Pacific Districts, Mexico.

Monday

READING—Mark 12:35-44.

TEXT—"Jesus . . . beheld how the people cast money into the treasury" (verse 41).

It is not only what we give but how we give it that matters to God. In the light of these three words, "Jesus beheld how," every offertory and each subscription become important. The eyes of His glory (Isa. 3:8) are upon us. We are regular givers, perchance, and we thank God for it; there was a Pharisee once who did the same (Luke 18:11, 12). How do we give? Proudly? "Well, that is pretty good at any rate." Self-consciously? "The vicar will be pleased with that, I feel sure." Half-heartedly? "One must, I suppose." Joyfully? "God loveth a cheerful [hilarious] giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). Down to the very root He follows the intricacies of our motives, only half-guessed by ourselves.—H. C. LEES.

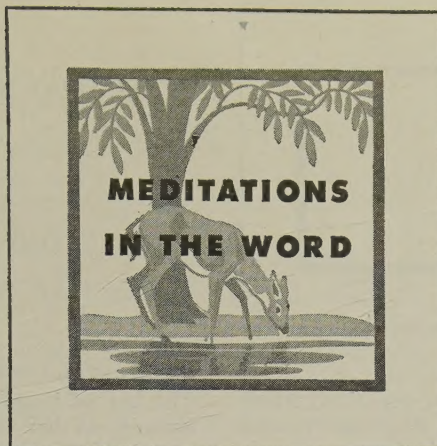
Pray for India; Western Pennsylvania District, Puerto Rico, Jewish Work.

Tuesday

READING—John 14:16-26.

TEXT—"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him" (verse 23).

The first and chief need of the Christian life is fellowship with God. The divine life within us comes from God and is entirely dependent upon Him. As I need every moment the air to breathe, as the sun every moment sends down its light afresh, so it is only in the direct living communication with God that my soul can be strong. The manna of one day was corrupt when the next day came. I must every day have fresh grace from heaven, and I obtain it only in direct waiting upon God Himself. Begin each day by tarrying before God and letting Him touch



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

you. Take time to meet God.—ANDREW MURRAY.

Pray for Africa; Western, Western Canadian, Southeastern Districts.

Wednesday

READING—1 Corinthians 15:51-58.

TEXT—"Always abounding in the work of the Lord" (verse 58).

*Go, labor on; spend and be spent,
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?*

*Go, labor on; 'tis not for naught;
Thine earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee
not;
The Master praises—what are men?*

*Go, labor on; enough, while here,
If He shall praise thee, if He deign
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer:
No toil for Him shall be in vain.*

*Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil comes rest, for exile home;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's
voice,
The midnight peal: "Behold, I come!"
—HORATIUS BONAR.*

Pray for Indo-China, Thailand; Northeastern, Eastern and Central Canadian Districts.

Thursday

READING—James 1:16-25.

TEXT—"He beholdeth . . . and . . . forgetteth" (verse 24).

I understand James to be speaking of the life of ministrant charity. Remember his definition of pure religion: to visit the fatherless in their affliction. He says that what prevents a man from doing this is the forgetfulness of his own yesterday. He forgets what his own face was like before it was beautified. If he could keep in his eye the first vision of himself in the glass, he would be greatly more sympathetic to the wants of his brother. And is not James right in his view? I believe that the root of all sympathy is retrospect—the memory of our own deliverance. I do not think that the actual time

of sorrow tends to make us sympathetic. No man can behold his natural face while it is natural; he can only see it as a memory. But if I forget what I was . . . I have lost the chord of my own compassion.—GEORGE MATHE-SON.

Pray for South America; Southwestern, Pacific Northwest Districts.

Friday

READING—Hebrews 8.

TEXT—"I took them by the hand to lead them out" (verse 9).

What unspeakable tenderness and fatherly care, what incomparable condescension on the part of the almighty Creator and Upholder of universes! He "took them by the hand" as a solicitous parent takes the hand of the little child, trusting that precious little one to no lesser person, to lead them (not drive them by hard threats and dark words) "out of Egypt," not in haphazard, uncertain paths that might bring them to and leave them in a worse bondage than they then suffered. No, a thousand times no; but out of their place of suffering, away from their present tormentors to a place of peace and plenty, He led them. And so it still is. Our God takes each of His little children by his hand and leads him out of his former life of hard bondage to sin and self, to a purer, fairer, happier land of His own provision.—PAMELI.

Pray for China, Hong Kong; Northwestern, New England Districts.

Saturday

READING—Isaiah 61:3-11.

TEXT—"The garment of praise" (verse 3).

During days of revival we have found that this "garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" had been an armor of light from the attacks of Satan. Above all else it is the atmosphere of heaven. Surely God's will can be carried out on earth only as we allow the atmosphere of heaven to permeate all our words, thoughts and actions. Is this not the reason why the songs of praise are so carefully recorded in that book of divine triumph, the Revelation to John? The foundations of this triumph of the Lamb were laid by David when he instituted the praise of God that the temple below might become more like that above. The jubilee trumpets were made out of the horns of the rams sacrificed unto God. It was these trumpets that were used before Jericho and on the year of jubilee or release.—UNKNOWN.

Pray for Israel, Jordan, Syria; Central, South Atlantic Districts.



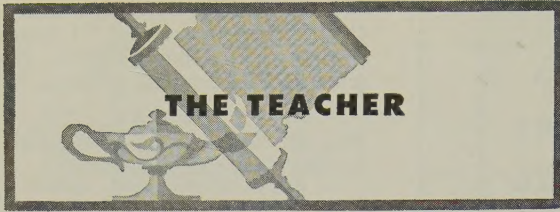
Dr. A. B. Simpson was led to vital faith in Christ through the printed word. You may point a soul to Christ through a gift subscription to THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY. Still only \$2.00 a year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—JULY 28, 1957

Gideon, Foe of Paganism

Judges 6:25-32

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 96:1-9

GOLDEN TEXT—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."
—EXODUS 20:3.

BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

For four hundred years Israel was a loosely organized tribal nation with very little if any centralization of power. It was during this period that some of her greatest heroes were born. The picture is a repetitious pattern: Israel is surrounded by hostile enemies ready to strip them on the slightest provocation. The people cry for deliverance and God sends them a deliverer. Because of a weak organization and the bent to idolatry the nation lapses back into bondage and the story is repeated. Gideon is considered here as an example of one who hated paganism and acted to stamp it out. God raised him and his kind up from obscurity to show His faithfulness to the people He had chosen for His redemptive purpose. They would never have been heard of had they not accomplished the will of God.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *God Strikes at Idolatry*—Judges 6:25-27.
2. *Gideon's Act Challenged*—Judges 6:28, 29.
3. *Joash Defies Baal*—Judges 6:30-32.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "Grove" (v. 25), a grove of trees in an elevated area, the scene for the worship of Baal. These high places are not unlike the shrines that are set up by modern idolaters. The position of the shrine made it possible for men to see what had happened because the trees were gone and the idol which was shaded by them was destroyed.

(2) "Baal" (v. 25), the sun god, was adored as manifesting the different aspects of fertility and productiveness issuing from the sun. Israel ever faced this god in her environment. When Jezebel, the pagan Sidonian queen of Ahab, came to Israel she brought her fully developed art of Baal worship with her and gave it its great impetus among the people of God.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *God Strikes at Idolatry* (Judges 6:25-27).

Immediately after God displayed His might to His servant Gideon He commissioned him while he was in the spirit of the moment to perform an act which took courage and promptness. He took one of his father's bullocks (which belonged to God in sacrifice) to offer before God. This was to be preceded by a complete destruction of every vestige of paganism on the high place. To have such a place of worship in the heart of Israel was a mockery to God. To have delivered them from their enemies before they were purged from their idolatries would have been religiously unsound. The true was to be erected above the ruins of the false.

The evidence of the restoration of Jehovah worship was to be made public. Although this initial act of obedience took place under the cover of darkness, Gideon's courage increased with his familiarity with God until he became the very symbol of courage to his people.

2. *Gideon's Act Challenged* (Judges 6:28, 29).

Rising early to worship, the eyes of the men of the village were turned toward the familiar shrine. To their amazement and anger it was despoiled. In its place was the altar of God with its bloody sacrifice. This would have the same effect as if someone today were to replace a shrine to the Virgin Mary with a Protestant chapel.

Gideon was soon marked out as the defier of Baal, a subject for wrath and quick vengeance. This cry for justice must have been awaited by Gideon with much apprehension. It is doubtful that he slept through the angry cries of the mob.

3. *Joash Defies Baal* (Judges 6:30-32).

But it is to the courageous act of the father that our attention is now drawn. It is he who stood between the irate mob and his son. His eloquent taunt was a match for the unreasonable spirit of the mob. The mob wanted blood. This was the fury of outraged religion which also felt that there was personal merit in effecting vengeance upon the blasphemer.

The questions of Joash were pungent, pointed: Is your god so weak that he needs someone to fight for him? Does he need an advocate to plead his cause for justice? This was adding insult to injury but doing so in the sphere of sound, unanswerable logic. Any god worth his salt ought to be able to handle a human indignity.

"Now will you save *him*?" This question struck at the very heart of pagan religion. Men are servants of the gods because gods are supposed to be deliverers. A god who is served for the help he gives should not need help himself.

Was this not exactly the taunt that Christ faced on the cross? If He be Saviour let Him save Himself. Christ met the challenge by remaining on the cross when He could have come down, and rising from the dead after He had been buried.

Joash claimed that any man who would champion the cause of an impotent god ought to be put to death for his folly. Gideon thus gained a name from his exploit—Jerubbaal, "let Baal plead."

no disgrace to want assurance from God of His will and His power in the performance of it. Differentiate between the Pharisees and Gideon wanting a sign. Let it be known that once the sign was granted there was no turning back.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

Emphasize those facts which show the relation between Gideon and his father. Show how Joash stood by his son in the consequences of his obedience to God. Note that it is

Flashes from Abroad

From India Mrs. E. G. Jacober writes: "At the annual camp meeting my husband preached a series of messages from Gideon. One morning a young lad named Joshua came forward and prayed at God would make him a soul-winner. He brought a young man with him to the very next meeting, and that young man was saved! How we praise God for the work of His Spirit among the Christians."

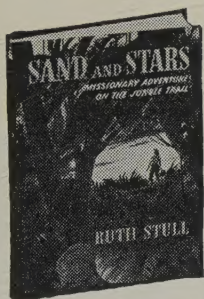
Miss R. Mabel Francis sends encouraging news from Japan: "Recently two elderly men, both saved on their deathbeds, entered the gates of glory. They had both been the objects of prayer for some years. One was a very prominent man in a country village. When it was discovered that he had cancer his wife, a Christian, called Rev. Mr. Ogato to pray for him. He was graciously saved and God let him live three months to give testimony to his village. His wife came

from the home of a prominent Shinto priest. She and her sister were saved some years ago and they have prayed that the property of their father's shrine might be turned to use for God. Recently the nephew, who has charge of the shrine and who has become a Christian, told us that he was working to see this prayer answered. There is prospect that it will soon become a day nursery where he can gather the children of the village for Sunday school teaching. Please pray about this and that the power of Shinto may be broken in that village. This incident is encouraging when we see new shrines built in many places."

Mrs. D. W. Cartmel is praising God for His touch in her body. For the first time in nine months she is free from fever and believes that in answer to prayer God has given her new life.

Rev. and Mrs. William Cutts are now alone on the Homejo station in New Guinea. They are the only missionaries working among the Monis.

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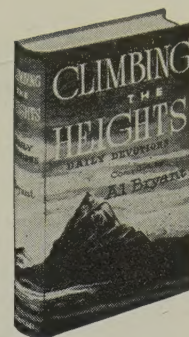
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ALLIANCE MISSIONS ON THE MARCH

Peruvian Christians Attend A Bible Convention at Acomayo

A FEW believers meet regularly in Acomayo, Peru, but no large Christian gatherings had ever been held in this mountain village until the recent Bible convention. On the opening day over one hundred and fifty people arrived for the first service. They came from villages throughout the region. The largest groups were from Tingo María and Huánuco, nearby places where there are flourishing churches. Accompanying the Christians were many friendly people who were attracted by the unusual meeting.

For the large crowd special provision had to be made. Ordinarily the home of one of the believers is sufficiently large to accommodate the worshippers. On this occasion the local Christians had stretched a large piece of canvas from the eaves of a building to make a crude tent. They placed planks across boxes to serve as benches and borrowed as many chairs as they could. As the crowds grew, people had to sit on the patio over which the tent had been stretched.

From the beginning of the convention a spirit of earnestness was manifest. In response to the invitation on the first night several people raised their hands as a token of their concern. In evangelistic services on succeeding nights there were seekers who came forward to pray. Some had known the Lord but had wandered away. Others responded for the first time to His call.

By Sunday morning the attendance had grown to three hundred people. Sunday afternoon the light rain which had been falling stopped and the sun broke through the clouds to warm the little valley where the baptismal service was held. In the icy waters of the swiftly flowing mountain stream twenty-two converts gave public testimony to their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

The climax of the convention was the Communion service. As twenty-two new Christians joined the others in the Lord's Supper, the sense of the Lord's presence was very real. The people then returned to their homes with gladness and singing. The days spent together about the Word of God and under faithful heart-searching preaching had lifted their vision and prepared them for the victorious walk in their everyday surroundings.

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